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| This project, entitled "Implementing Peer Correction and Effective Feedback to                    |
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| Improve Writing Skills in EFL Students" and written by Yisell Paola Garcia Santiago, is           |
| presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College. I recommend that it be accepted in       |
| partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in Teaching |
| English to Speakers of Other Languages.   |

|  | Michelle Plaisance, Advisor       |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| We have reviewed this Project and recommend its acceptance |                                   |
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| Kathleen Keating Chair, Department of English              |                                   |
|  | Accepted for the Graduate Program |
|  | Jane C. Girardi                   |

# IMPLEMENTING PEER CORRECTION AND EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS IN EFL STUDENTS

Presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

by Yisell Garcia Santiago

May 2020

Advisor: Dr. Michelle Plaisance

#### **Abstract**

Writing in a second or foreign language can be a difficult process especially if this is not actually considered a process by teachers and students. In an attempt to contribute to more effective practices in teaching writing to ESL/EFL students, I created a workshop designed for teachers who are willing to incorporate peer correction activities in their classes. The workshop objective is to help ESL/EFL teachers make informed decisions in adopting different types of groups, modes, foci as well as the rules, procedures and instruction necessary to develop the peer correction process. Teachers will have opportunities to share their conceptions and experiences along with the chance to work on an implementation plan as the workshop develops. The workshop should help teachers effectively implement peer correction resulting in students' writing skills improvement.

#### **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this thesis to Him who sits on the throne, because He makes everything possible. I would also like to dedicate this to my husband Jhon, whose words of encouragement made me embark on this process. To my children Ricardo and Gabriela, my parents Oscar and Aldara, my aunt Nazira, my siblings Angie and Oscar Ivan and all my family and friends back in Colombia who supported and encouraged me throughout my studies.

#### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Michelle Plaisance whose dedication and support helped me complete this thesis. I would also like to express thanks to Professors Paula Wilder and Elena King whose teachings sparked my reflection on ESL/ EFL writing and helped me shape this work. An especial word of gratitude to the administrators and ESL teachers at D.R. Hill Middle School and Byrnes Freshman Academy who supported me as well.

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#### **Chapter One: Introduction**

My experience as a teacher has been divided into two parallel experiences, first as an English teacher for university students pursuing undergraduate degrees in Colombia and secondly, as a Spanish teacher in South Carolina. Even when one may consider the similarities of teaching Spanish or English as a foreign language, my experience teaching English is somewhat special because I learned it as a foreign language myself and as a teacher, I had the chance to teach high intermediate to advanced students. My students in Colombia usually ranged between 17- to 25-years old and were taking English as a requirement for graduation. Most of them could state that they needed it for their professional lives even more since current research in their fields were written in English and because they were also willing to undertake a graduate degree, requiring them to take an international test.

One of my biggest concerns as a teacher was my students' writing skills. I frequently found myself grading papers not knowing exactly what to do; I was not sure if I needed to correct or just grade and I did not know how to do it fairly for everyone. I found myself just taking away points for grammar or spelling errors and not giving suggestions on how to improve. I could not do it; I did not know what needed to be improved, but I knew something was wrong. The university would just give teachers a chart with some "conventions" such as SP for spelling, V for verb, WW for wrong word, but they never told us how to grade with that or if each mistake had a specific value. What I noticed with the rest of my colleagues is that they, just as I did, would just subjectively grade the papers mostly on grammar use.

As this was my major concern in EFL, when I started learning about writing as a MA TESOL student, I was impressed especially by the benefits of peer correction. I started thinking

that it could be beneficial for teachers back home to know and implement peer correction in their instruction. As I did research on this topic, I realized that even when it has been considerably studied, I did not see myself or my colleagues implementing this technique in our classes. Peer correction, accompanied by teacher feedback, could be widely and productively used if teachers knew how to plan for it, how to instruct students in giving feedback to peers and how to organize and monitor the whole process. Consequently, I created a workshop for teachers about this topic, helping them organize the plans to start implementing this in their classes. This way, students should improve their writing skills, which will also result in better grades in not only their classes, but also improve their performance on international tests. Those students pursuing a graduate degree could also have a head start on how to write more effectively especially for international colleges.

As a native speaker of Spanish, I have learned through my own process as a student that the differences between English and Spanish in terms of what is expected when writing and the way ideas are organized in writing can be overwhelming. Leki (1992) stated, "If writing in an L1 requires the orchestration of countless skills and strategies, from the most basic motor skill to the most complex cognitive strategies, writing in an L2 clearly increases the writers' cognitive load." (p. 4). However, as teachers may understand, by providing clear expectations, giving opportunities to revise and peer correct, this process should be easier for EFL students.

#### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Writing is a very important skill for students. Teaching EFL students to write appropriately in an L2 can also be challenging for educators, especially when this skill is regarded as a product or is neglected in instruction. In this chapter, I present the process-writing approach focusing on peer review and its suitability for the communicative and the cognitive approaches to teaching languages. I then discuss the benefits and possible drawbacks of peer review and conclude with some suggestions and activities to implement peer review effectively in our classes.

#### **EFL** Writing as a process

Even when writing in a second language has similarities with writing in the first language (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017), writing can still be defined as a complex cognitive activity in that the learner needs to demonstrate "control of contents, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling and letter formation" (Nunan 1989, as cited in Sapkota, 2012. p. 70). If the writing process itself is a complex one, it is fair to argue that it is an even more complex process when learning a second language. Leki (1992) stated, "If writing in an L1 requires the orchestration of countless skills and strategies, from the most basic motor skill to the most complex cognitive strategies, writing in an L2 clearly increases the writers' cognitive load" (p. 4). Considering the implications of the writing skill, EFL teachers use several different or a combination of techniques and strategies to help students succeed. The process writing approach is one of those strategies. Thought first as beneficial for English writers, it has been used in EFL contexts as well (Leki, 1990; Parrish, 2004; Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Sanchez-Naranjo, 2019; Yu & Lee,

2016). Process writing mostly consists of different phases including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Peer review has generally been used as part of revising and editing phases.

#### **Peer Review**

Several frameworks support peer review. To start with, the Collaborative Learning Theory (Bruffee, 1984, as cited in Hansen & Liu, 2005) claimed that writing is a socially constructed activity that takes place through communication with peers. In addition, peer review is also supported by Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory (1978, as cited in Hansen & Liu, 2005), as it holds that "the cognitive development of individuals result from social interaction in which individuals extend their current competence through the guidance of a more experienced individual ..."(p. 31). Hansen and Liu (2005) also mentioned the interactionist theories of second language acquisition according to which learners need to be pushed to negotiate meaning to facilitate the process.

Research on the nature of second language teaching distinguishes two methodologies that are mainly student-centered: the communicative approach and the cognitive approach (Herrera & Murry, 2016). Peer correction activities are in line with both of these approaches. On the one hand, methods used in the communicative approach such as integrated content-based and sheltered method favor collaborative learning and teacher modeling and support as well as class discussions. Moreover, the sheltered method supports cooperative learning as it fosters the perspective that each student care about another's learning (Herrera & Murry, 2016); this is consistent with peer revision.

Scaffolding is another characteristic of the sheltered method that is also in accordance with peer revision. De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) observed scaffolding mechanisms in the learners interaction while peer reviewing, including the use of L1 in discussions to help create and clarify meaning as also discussed in the sheltered method (Garcia, 1998; Graves, August & Mancilla- Martinez, 2012; Jimenez; 1997; Jimenez et al., 1996; Saunders et al., 1999, as cited in Herrera & Murry, 2016).

On the other hand, the cognitive approach to teaching, which focuses on explicitly teaching language learners to understand and apply metacognitive, cognitive and social affective strategies (Chamot, 2009; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994, as cited in Herrera & Murry, 2016) promotes social/affective strategies such as questioning for clarification and cooperative learning. Additionally, the cognitive approach proposes the metacognitive strategy of self-monitoring that, as discussed later, is present in students involved in peer reviewing.

#### **Benefits of Peer Review**

Peer review as part of process writing has been established to have outstanding benefits on students' writing skills. (Itmeizeh, 2016; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Yu & Lee, 2016). Peer review is beneficial for ESL writers if teachers coach them on how to comment on their peers' papers. As a result, students will reflect on their own writing (Hyland, 2019; Itmeizeh, 2016; Nicol, Thomson & Breslin, 2014; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Suherman, 2018; Sultana, 2009), develop a sense of autonomy (Hyland, 2019; Rollinson, 2005; Sackstein, 2017; Sultana, 2009), and participate in a collaborative environment in the classroom (De-Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Hammond, 2015, Herrera & Murry, 2016; Itmeizeh, 2016; Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Sackstein, 2017; Suherman, 2018).

#### **Improve Students' Writing**

When students are encouraged to produce effective responses to their peers, they also reflect on their own writing. Rouhi and Azizian (2013) subsequently demonstrated that students who were just giving feedback outscored the students who were just receiving it, in both immediate and delayed post-test. In the same way, the latter group outscored the comparison group. The authors concluded that their study accords to that of Lundstorm and Baker (2009, as cited in Rouhi & Azizian, 2013), "suggesting that giving feedback to peers has the potentiality to be more effective than receiving it in improving students' writing quality" (p. 1353). Rollinson (2005) also argued that students become critical readers of their peer's papers, making them more critical readers and revisers of their own. Furthermore, Itmeizeh's (2013) study also showed that students have profited from peer feedback to reduce mistakes in their composition.

Accordingly, Nicol, Thomson, and Breslin (2014) stated, "producing feedback reviews engages students in multiple acts of evaluative judgment, both about the work of peers and, through a reflective process, about their own work" (Abstract). Similarly, Harmer (2004, as cited in Suherman, 2018) argued, "peer feedback provided learners with more opportunities to evaluate their own writing problems by examining the comments received" (p. 195). The research suggests that students certainly benefit from peer correction activities as they learn to reflect on the language, producing more accurate writing pieces. Since students' reflections on their own writing can be considered part of the metacognitive strategy of self-monitoring, peer review is in agreement with the cognitive approach to teaching a second language.

#### Autonomy

In addition to reflecting on their own writing, students who engage in peer response will take ownership and autonomy of their writing process, helping them improve their writing skills (De Guerrero & Villamil, 1994). Itmeizeh (2016) claimed that peer corrections make students feel like active participants of the process, as they feel responsible for some duties. Rollinson (2005) argued that when peer correction is used the teacher hands over a significant degree of responsibility. This means that students become active learners in the process of writing. As Sultana (2009) also stated, "peer feedback takes the focus away from the teacher and thus initiates a transfer of roles from the teacher to the learners" (p. 12). He remarked on the importance of students' involvement in the classroom as it results in better learning; He conceded that teachers who believe in students' autonomy would advocate these kinds of activities as they offer "opportunities to the students to be responsible for their own learning" (p. 12). The teacher should help students to construct meaning from experience and interactions with peers as advanced in the sheltered method (Herrera & Murry, 2016). Moreover, helping students feel responsible or capable of constructing their own learning will also influence their motivation towards the writing process that can be difficult for ESL writers.

#### Collaboration

As the writing process can be difficult for ESL writers, peer responses may also help with the creation of an environment of enjoyable collaboration in the classroom and at the same time, allow the writer to have a real reader with whom they can construct meaning. Itmeizeh (2016) elaborated on students' attitudes toward the peer-review technique and showed that students feel positive feelings when correcting or being corrected by peers. The author stated that students

enjoy being corrected by peers and "have a genuine audience with who they feel comfortable and relaxed" (p. 2075). Itmeizeh (2016) concluded that when peers correct students, this student-centered approach makes the whole environment more enjoyable and interesting. Likewise, integrated content- based and sheltered methods, as well the cognitive approach support collaboration in second language teaching by means of providing a relaxed context besides an authentic purpose for using the language (Herrera & Murry, 2016).

Second, in terms of an audience, Leki (1992) stated that writers must invent the reader. She contrasted an inexperienced L1 writer who cannot determine what is relevant or not when constructing an argument and claimed this problem is even bigger for an L2 writer since they do not share the culture of their readers. Lundstrom and Baker (2009, as cited in Suherman, 2018) reported that peer feedback facilitated social interaction and negotiation. Therefore, providing peer review activities in the classroom is beneficial as learners have a real chance to receive feedback on their writing and may also clarify meaning with their peers in further discussions. This is the sense of audience reported by Mendonça and Johnson (1994) in accordance as well with the collaborative learning theory mentioned before. Being able to provide learners with a less stressed or strict environment will help them ease the tensions already produced by having to write in a second language.

Furthermore, Hammond (2015) stated that students develop independence through language and talk, as it helps us process our learning, connect with others and expand our thinking. Hammond (2015) noted that talk activities are conducive for a community-building sense in a classroom as the student can be used to or be part of collectivist cultures where participation and interaction define their identity. De Guerrero and Villamil (1994) stated that

through peer feedback the cognitive processes that are needed for task completion are exercised in collaboration and internalized for independent problem solving.

#### **Possible Drawbacks**

Despite the stated benefits of peer review activities, teachers and students may feel hesitant to participate in this activity. Firstly, teachers may feel this is a time consuming strategy (Rollinson, 2005), that students' language is not fully developed to actually correct others (Sanchez- Naranjo, 2019) and they may also feel that they should not hand over the responsibility to students to correct others' papers (Rollinson, 2005). Some students may not like peer review activities because of their limited proficiency of the language and its rhetorical rules (Rouhi & Azizian, 2013). Others may also have negative attitudes towards peer review; students can be over critical, and some students can also have negative reactions to their peers' comments (Leki, 1990; Nelson & Murphy, 1992, as cited in Rouhi and Azizian, 2013).

Similarly, Sackstein (2016) reasoned that some students may be reluctant to receive feedback including the teacher's. Some students simply do not know how to listen to feedback and some others might need the practice to apply it. Leki (1990) stated that one of the problems when doing peer correction can be caused by students confusing editing with responding.

Additionally, Rollinson (2005) and Leki (1990) reported that some students could not easily accept comments from another inexperienced ESL writer/reader. In the same way, Hyland (2019) claimed that students feel unprepared if they are not given guidance in responding to peers. However, the peer review technique has a demonstrable beneficial influence on students writing skills. Studies concluded that the teacher's role is a key factor in diminishing the

disadvantages the process may have (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Min, 2016; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2016; Sapkota, 2012).

#### **Suggestions for Teachers: Implementing Peer Review**

Both communicative and cognitive approaches to language instruction and related methods such as Integrated Content-Based, Sheltered Instruction method and CALLA emphasize the importance of student-centered activities in a collaborative environment for learning to occur (Herrera & Murry, 2016). Peer correction not only fits into these methods of learning but also demands the teacher's role to plan, model, monitor, and evaluate the process.

Research on peer review included suggestions and conclusions regarding the importance of the teacher's role in planning, guiding, modeling, monitoring, and controlling the process of peer review. There have also been different suggestions and guides for teachers on how to implement peer feedback in the classroom (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hyland, 2019; Rollinson, 2005; Sackstein, 2016). One of the main suggestions is that teachers should create an environment where all participants trust peer review. Hansen and Liu (2005) claimed that in such environments "students feel more comfortable to engage in negotiation of meaning and to provide each other with the linguistic content, and rhetorical expressions and knowledge (i.e. scaffolding) when necessary" (p. 33). Hyland (2019) also highlighted the importance of a non-judgmental environment conducive for peer feedback.

Steps for *before*, *during* and *after* the process have also been described. Many agree on the fact that informing students, making them aware of the relevance of the process and training them are pivotal beforehand (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hyland, 2019; Rollinson, 2005; Sackstein, 2016). Sackstein (2016) remarked that students need to be taught how to receive feedback before

the process is done, she claimed that the teacher's knowledge of the students is valuable as the teacher may need to adapt different activities especially for students who are more reluctant to receive feedback. Hyland (2019) stated that by informing students, they are able to see the advantages of this activity, take it seriously and understand its purpose and rules. Hansen and Liu (2005) remarked the importance of planning, modeling, class discussion, and students' practice *before* the process.

Additionally, Hyland (2019) stated that acclimating students may begin by having them work on their own paper first, providing them with a list of things to look for in their writing and even having them write a note to the teacher about their purpose, difficulties and strengths when writing that piece. Hyland also suggested having students work with an external essay (an essay from another class) following some questions that should guide their comments or corrections to the paper. Likewise, Hansen and Liu (2005) also described activities such as class discussions and even a mock peer response activity before the actual one so it gives practice and familiarity to the students.

Hansen and Liu (2005) also suggested the discussion and creation of a rubric and/or appropriate comments sheets to provide students with. They listed this step as one of the principles for the technique related to "create a purposeful and appropriate response sheet for the given task, genre and purpose" (p. 33). Accordingly, the integrated content-based method presents class discussions and teacher – student created rubrics as a way to determine students' comprehension of the key concepts along with the characteristics of high-quality work (Herrera & Murry, 2016). The teacher needs to ensure that the process of peer reviewing is done in a way that is truly beneficial for students. The best way to ensure this is by properly training students on the corrections that should be made. Teacher modeling is important, as well (Hyland, 2019).

Leki (1990) reported that students could be sarcastic when responding to their classmates. She claimed that this could be a result of a copied behavior from previous students' teachers, who do not normally focus on the process but just on the product. Teacher continuous modeling and support are potentially helpful for students to reflect on the process as described in integrated content-based method by Herrera and Murry (2016).

Sackstein (2016) maintained that teachers need to ensure that comments are high quality ones, by making sure students understand the success criteria and how to provide comments that offer a plan of action to their peers. Hyland (2005) listed activities to work with students such as charts, videos, and phrases to comment, as well as more core response principles type of questions. Having enough familiarity with the process should make students feel more comfortable and able to complete the peer review task.

Moreover, the importance of acclimating students was showed by Rouhi and Azizian (2013) quasi-experimental study with a group of 45 students divided into three groups: the givers, the receivers, and the comparison group. They explained that the givers were trained and provided with a model on how to correct their peers' papers. This is a very important part of the process as the authors could determine that this training helped students not only to reflect on their own writing pieces but assured the success of the activity. One of the authors' conclusions was, "without getting learners prepared for participating in peer review, the teacher might not succeed to achieve a satisfactory result" (p. 1351).

For strategies for *during* the peer revision process, Hansen and Liu (2005) mentioned encouragement and monitoring. This means that teachers need to coach students in asking the right questions and that teachers need to monitor closely what students are doing during the process. Studies on peer review suggested that the role of the teacher as a monitor and facilitator

of the process is crucial (Hyland, 2019; Min, 2016; Sackstein, 2017). By closely monitoring the peer review process the teacher can be certain that learners are taking advantage of the process and are also giving appropriate responses to their peers (Hyland 2019; Rollinson, 2005; Sackstein, 2016).

Sackstein (2016) claimed that teachers need to instruct students to ask clarifying questions. She favored the use of modeling or role-plays for this purpose. Letting students know and reflect on the kind of questions that would motivate constructive talk during the process and that will consequently help the peers to advance in their learning. In line with this, the sheltered instruction encourages teachers to use high quality activities that provide students opportunities to read, write, listen and speak promoting their cognitive, linguistic and academic development (Herrera & Murry, 2016).

Hansen and Liu (2005) listed three main principles for *after* the peer revision activity: having students list and decide which comments to use and why, linking peer review to another classroom activity, and discussing the activity as a class. As students list and decide which comments to use, they are negotiating meaning with their reviewer. When the activity is linked to another, they get to reflect on the process and as they have class discussions, they can express their feeling and realize the impact of peer review on their writing skills.

Additionally, Sackstein (2016) proposed using the feedback students produced in an activity afterwards, to address possible confusion and to offer students help on how to apply this feedback. Hyland (2005) also mentioned the possibility for teachers to collect, comment or even grade all feedback as a way to integrate it into the course. Correspondingly, students may reflect on the feedback received by writing a reaction including what and how they have accepted for subsequent drafts. Also, Itemizer's (2016) research on the impact of peer correction on reducing

mistakes on students writing as well as students' attitudes towards this technique recommended that peer review be used along with self and teacher correction. Peer review complements teacher's feedback (Hyland 2019; Rollinson, 2005), so it is also important to conduct conferences with students where teachers can provide their feedback after students have applied their peers' suggestions. Hansen and Liu (2005) advised that teacher's feedback should be given on a different stage in the process.

In conclusion, teachers are responsible for setting and organizing their lessons and classroom to create an environment where peer correction can be done. Teachers need to appropriately provide practice for students so that they know exactly how and what to correct or respond to peers' papers. Teachers have the responsibility of modeling appropriate responses as students imitate their teachers when they peer review (Hyland, 2019; Leki, 1990; Sackstein, 2016). As ESL writing teachers use different techniques to guide and help learners in their writing process, it is essential that they understand the benefits and consequently plan their instruction. By planning their instruction, teachers will foster a self-reflection and collaborative environment that will eventually produce autonomous and well-prepared writers.

#### **Chapter Three: Project Design**

Writing as a language skill can be difficult for ESL/ EFL students as they not only need to demonstrate understanding of sentence level rules, body organization, and purpose of the writing piece, but they also need to think of a reader, mostly from a different culture, who could make sense of their writing. Process writing addresses writing in a way that allows writers, especially ESL/ EFL learners to progressively develop their writing pieces focusing on one part of the process at a time, lowering the anxiety that this may cause them. At the same time, process writing addresses the audience component, since the writer will no longer invent a reader; on the contrary, the student will have a peer who can read and provide feedback that subsequently enhances the final product.

The benefits of peer reviewing activities have been studied by several authors who accounted for the importance of the teacher's role in the process (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Min, 2016; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2016; Sapkota, 2012). Planning, coaching and monitoring students throughout the process is pivotal to obtaining peer review benefits. By using peer correction as part of the writing process approach, teachers should be able to see an improvement in students' writing skills; at the same time, learners' autonomy and collaboration in the classroom will be exercised (De-Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Hammond, 2015; Herrera & Murry, 2016; Hyland, 2019; Itmeizeh, 2016; Nicol, Thomson & Breslin, 2014; Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2017; Suherman, 2018; Sultana, 2009; Yu & Lee, 2016).

The thesis project is a professional development session based on a Power Point presentation designed for teachers of EFL students in Colombia. Hurtado and Gonzalez (2007)

reported that 70% of the Colombian EFL teachers they were tutoring in the use of cooperative learning did not know or used cooperative learning in their practice. Additionally, Aldana (2005) worked with a group of Colombian ninth grade students who lacked engagement in their writing tasks. Aldana (2005) reported that by using cooperative learning in the writing process, students showed improvement, not only in their attitudes towards writing tasks, but also in their writing skills. In the same way, Caicedo Triviño (2016) reported that students had serious difficulties in understanding their role when working using a cooperative learning approach.

Similarly, Mendoza Lopez (2005) reported after his observation of English classes in 6 different schools in Colombia, that "writing was done mainly at home which supports the idea that process- oriented writing is rarely done in class" (p. 32). Mendoza Lopez (2005) highlighted the fact that process writing requires teachers who are willing to help the students improve their writing skills. Yet, as Mendoza Lopez (2005) also noted, being that Colombian culture is mainly oral, teachers emphasize oral and listening activities. For this reason, teachers need to have professional development sessions that show them that through peer correction, students have the chance to practice and improve the four language skills.

Through this project, I provide teachers with current research on the writing process focusing on peer review, strategies to implement peer review, possible difficulties, and keys to overcome them. The session lasts about 4 hours and includes interactive, reflection and practice activities for participants. The research compiled on peer review has informed the Power Point presentation. The session is designed to help teachers reflect on their understanding about collaborative learning and peer correction activities, and their experience in using them; it also gives them the chance to hear from other teachers' experiences. There will be final reflection on the process and the overall presentation. Teachers will be questioned as to the extent to which

they think they can implement peer review in their classes and what possible constraints they might have.

The workshop is designed to help teachers see the applicability in their context of this beneficial practice, as they can be reluctant to use it (Rollinson, 2005; Sanchez-Naranjo, 2019). It is designed to provide teachers with some strategies or activities that can make the implementation process easier since many teachers may feel unprepared for the process or do not know how to prepare their students (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Hyland, 2019; Rollinson 2005; Sackstein, 2017; Sanchez-Naranjo, 2019). Ultimately, the presentation is designed to build teachers' confidence, awareness, and understanding in a process that has proven to produce effective learning in the second language (De-Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Hammond, 2015; Herrera & Murry, 2016; Hyland, 2019; Itmeizeh, 2016; Nicol, Thomson & Breslin, 2014; Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2017; Suherman, 2018; Sultana, 2009; Yu & Lee, 2016).

#### **Chapter Four: The Project**

This workshop intends to inform teachers about Peer Correction activities viewed as a beneficial component of the writing process. As a teacher, I have struggled with teaching writing skills and especially got frustrated grading writing pieces. I have designed this workshop for teacher who, like me, feel that there must be effective ways to teach writing and are willing to help students achieve writing skill competence in the second or foreign language.

The workshop starts with the presentation of the objectives (Figure 4.1, see also Appendix A, slide 2).

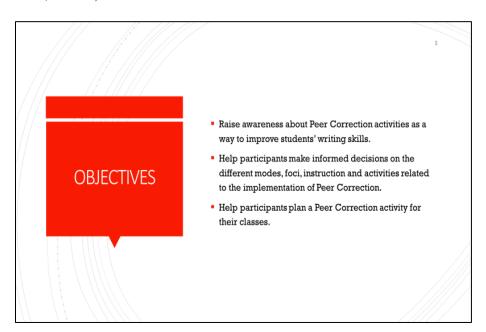


Figure 4.1 Objectives

I will then prompt teachers with questions about how they feel about teaching writing and grading papers, I will share my experience here as a way to break the ice and encourage participation (Figure 4.2, see also Appendix A, slide 3). We will have some volunteers share their experience.

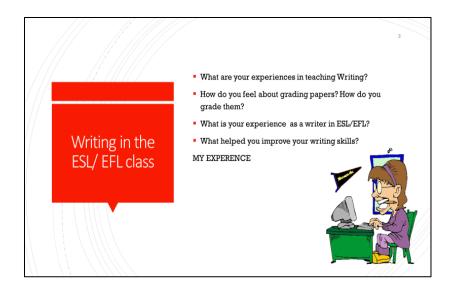


Figure 4.2 Starting Questions.

The presentation will continue with the definition of Peer Correction (Figure 4.3 see also Appendix A slide 4) by Hansen and Liu, (2002).

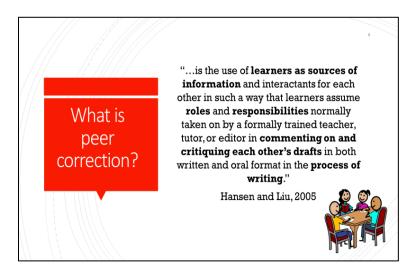


Figure 4.3 Peer Correction definition

Participants will be asked to discuss in pairs the following question (Appendix A, slide 5): Have you used peer correction activities in your classes? After the five minutes discussion in pairs, I will present what Rollinson (2005) and Sanchez-Naranjo (2019) listed as main reasons for teachers' reluctance to use peer correction activities (Figure 4.4 see also appendix A, slide 5).

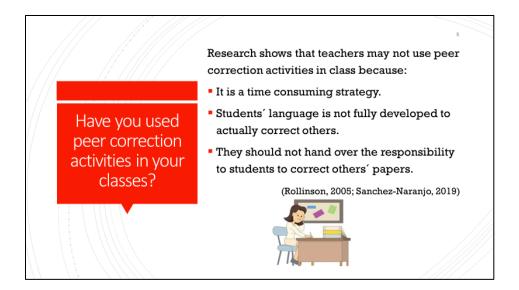


Figure 4.4 Main reasons for teachers' reluctance towards peer correction use.

I then explain three major benefits of using Peer Correction in writing assignments (Figure 4.5, See also Appendix A slide 6) as informed by several authors (De-Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Hammond, 2015, Herrera & Murry, 2016; Hyland, 2019; Itmeizeh, 2016; Nicol, Thomson & Breslin, 2014; Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2017; Suherman, 2018; Sultana, 2009).

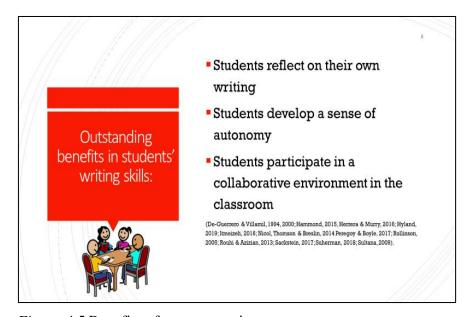


Figure 4.5 Benefits of peer correction

After that, I will ask the teachers to elaborate on what they anticipate their students might think about peer correction by reflecting on their own experience as students with group work or peer correction activities if they had it. They again will discuss in pairs for five minutes and volunteer to share their answers (Figure 4.6, see also Appendix A slide 10).

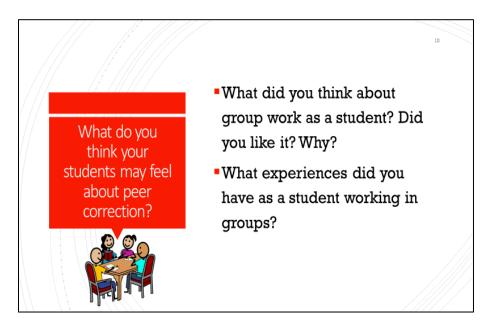


Figure 4.6 Reflection questions about group work.

I will continue by showing them the most common negative student perceptions about peer correction according to the research (Hyland, 2019; Leki, 1990; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2016) in Figure 4.7 (see also Appendix A, slide 11).

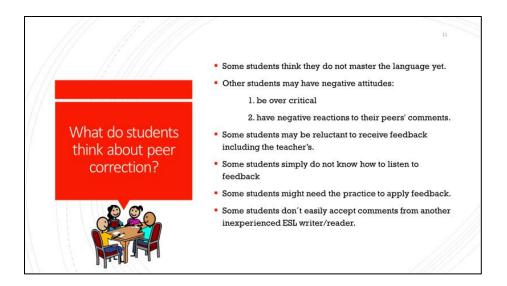


Figure 4.7 Students' common negative perception about peer correction.

This information will be complemented with the statement that even when some students may not like the activity, they mostly welcome peer correction according to Hansen and Liu (2002).

The subsequent slide (Appendix A, slide 13) states that planning can make a difference in the results teachers can obtain after implementing peer correction in our classes (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Min, 2016; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2016; Sapkota, 2012). Slides 14 and 15 (Appendix A, slides 14-15) show a process diagram (see Figure 4.8) depicting key considerations about planning peer correction activities along with my proposed plan template (see Figure 4.9) to implement peer correction adapted from the information gathered from Hansen and Liu, (2002, 2005), Hyland (2019), Rollinson (2005) and Sackstein, (2016). Participants will be asked to fill out the lesson template as we discuss each section of the process.

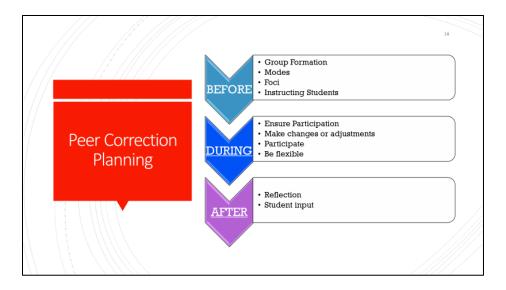


Figure 4.8. Process diagram for Peer Correction Implementation.

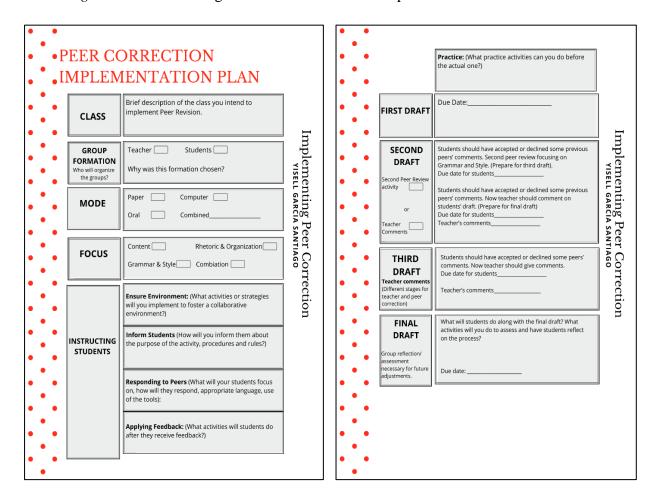
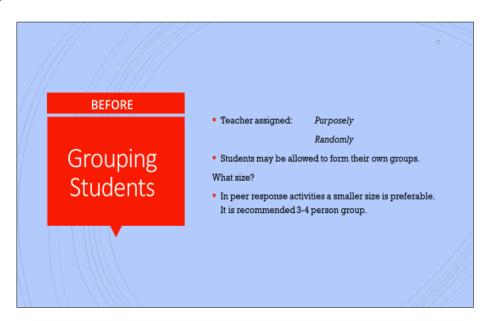
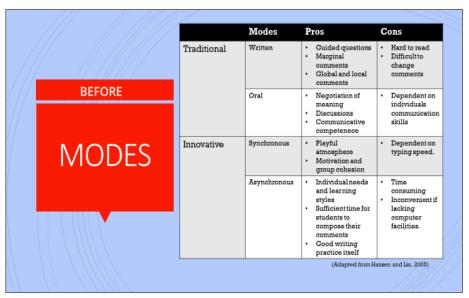


Figure 4.9. Proposed Peer Correction Implementation Plan Template (See also Appendix C).

As we cover every part of the process, participants are encouraged to ask questions as needed since they should complete the template. I will also allocate time after the explanations for teachers to complete each portion of the task (See Figure 4.10, see also Appendix A, slides 16 to 32).





## BEFORE

# What to focus on?

- There are several foci for students responses.
- Depending on students' needs and wants, teachers need to guide students on what to focus when doing peer revisions.
- Students need to understand what to look for and need practice on how to use whatever the teacher, the students or both design or use as response tool.

#### **BEFORE**

What to focus:

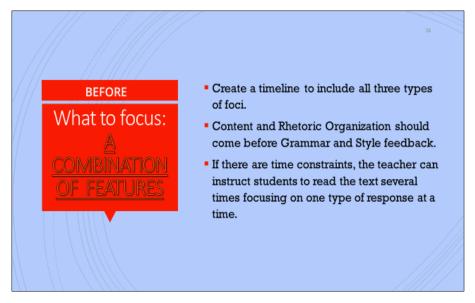
<u>GRAMMAR</u>
AND STYLE

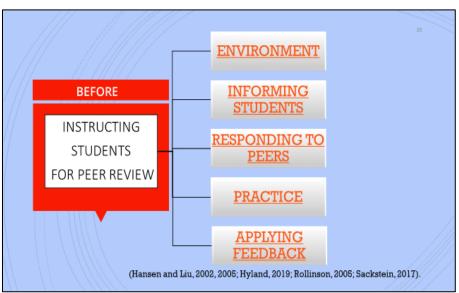
- It shows students' levels of metalinguistic knowledge so the teacher can create a minilesson as needed.
- It allows peers to learn from peers.
- It helps raise students' awareness of grammar through a critical reading of the text.

It should focus just on

- A few grammar/ style issues at a time.
- What students have already been instructed.

This should be done before the final draft.





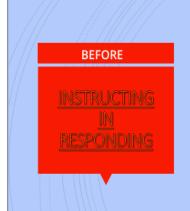


- Research shows that Peer Correction is beneficial especially if students have been instructed in this activity.
- Students need an environment where they feel respected and trusted.
- They need to be able to trust others as well.
- Ice-breaker and get-to-know-you activities.
- Students can also work in groups for other assignments as a way to foster rapport.

# BEFORE INFORMING STUDENTS

Students need to be informed

- What is Peer Correction
- Its benefits
- Rules and Procedures
- Students can be asked to discuss previous experiences in group work and peer correction itself.



Students need instruction, modelling and practice in how to appropriately respond to their peers. Including how to:

- Provide high quality responses that lead to discussion and revision.
- Ask clarification questions.
- Use the tools (sheets, questions, rubrics, computer program).
- Focus on what is asked (content, rhetoric, grammar).

The teacher should model since students mirror teachers' response patterns.

When students are asked to participate in the creation of the response sheets, rubrics or questions, they are more invested in the activity.



Practice should be an important part of the training.

- Students learn turn taking strategies.
- Students learn appropriate language. Teachers need to provide appropriate sociocultural language for the task.

Students practice activities include

- Working on their own paper, writing a note to the teacher on what they learnt, what worked and what didn't.
- Responding to an external essay in groups.
- Mock peer correction activity.

BEFORE

HOW TO APPLY
FEEDBACK

Students also need instruction in how to apply the feedback received. Students should:

- List the comments they receive,
- Choose the ones they plan to use in their revision
- Justify why they chose them.

The teacher may also take advantage of his or her knowledge of students to customize the feedback and have some listening activities that improve students listening skills.

# DURING

ADJUSTING MONITORING PARTICIPATING

#### The teacher:

- Needs to ensure that students are participating.
- Can be participant in many ways.
  - 1. BEING A PEER
  - 2. SIT AND MONITOR EVERY GROUP
  - DESIGNATE A GROUP MANAGER THAT TALKS TO HIM / HER.
- Needs to be flexible.
- Might need to regroup students based on their dynamics.
- Needs to address possible issues on the spot. (Practice/ Training activities should have covered some)

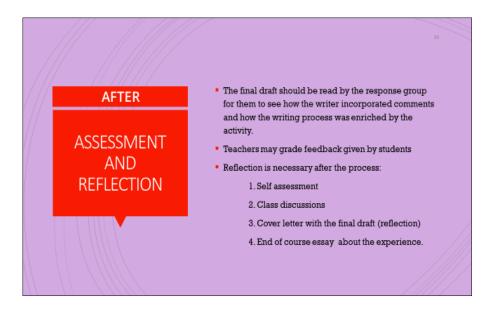


Figure 4.10 Slides 16-32

When we reach the final part of the workshop, participant will be prompted again to discuss the following questions in pairs and then participate in a whole group discussion afterwards (Appendix A, slide 35):

- What do you think is the easiest part of the process?
- What is the hardest part?
- What ideas for implementing Peer Review in your own context did you come up with?
- What questions or concerns do you still have about Peer Correction?

The slide 36 (Appendix A, slide 36) will show some concluding statements about the role of the teacher in appropriately implementing peer correction:

- Teachers are responsible for creating an environment where peer correction can be done.
- Teachers need to appropriately provide practice for students so that they know exactly how and what to correct or respond to peers' papers.

 Teachers have the responsibility of modeling appropriate responses as students imitate their teachers when they peer review

By planning instruction, teachers will foster a self-reflection and collaborative environment that will eventually produce autonomous and well-prepared writers.

The workshop will end with an invitation for teachers to evaluate the presentation using the following form (Figure 4.11, see also Appendix E):

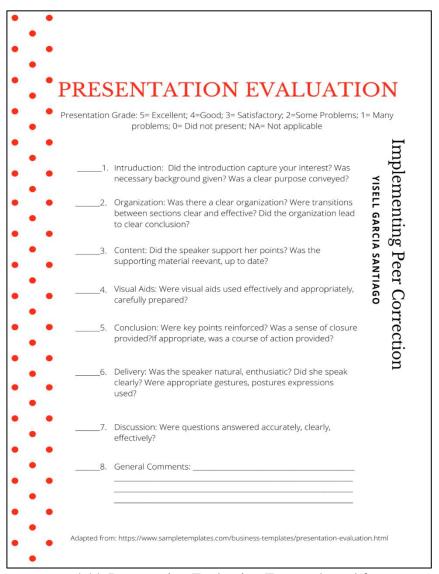


Figure 4.11. Presentation Evaluation Form, adapted from

https://www.sampletemplates.com/business-templates/presentation-evaluation.html

### **Chapter Five: Conclusion**

As an English teacher of speakers of other languages, I have been concerned about the development of writing skills in my students, especially those who major in different fields and for whom writing might not be that important or easy. I was also concerned about grading writing assignments because I did not know what to grade and how to do it. Focusing on content was almost impossible when grammar or vocabulary hindered my comprehension of the text. I felt even worse knowing that those writing assignments were the final and only paper and that probably none of my suggestions would be actually considered since a grade was already given.

While taking the academic writing course as a master's student, I was greatly impacted by the study of the benefits of peer correction in ESL/EFL writing. Having the opportunity to gather information about this topic fostered my reflection and enriched my understanding on how teachers could take advantage of a workshop that helps them acknowledge peer correction, helps them make informed decisions on the considerations they need to have, and helps them plan the implementation of this activity effectively.

The participants of this workshop will have several opportunities to reflect on the writing process and the collaborative benefits in class, as I intent to clarify misconceptions and bias teachers and students may have about peer work. By providing teachers with research data and studies, they should gain confidence in implementing peer correction in their practice, Moreover, by providing teachers with a plan template and discussing every part of it, teachers should feel capable of organizing each part of the process.

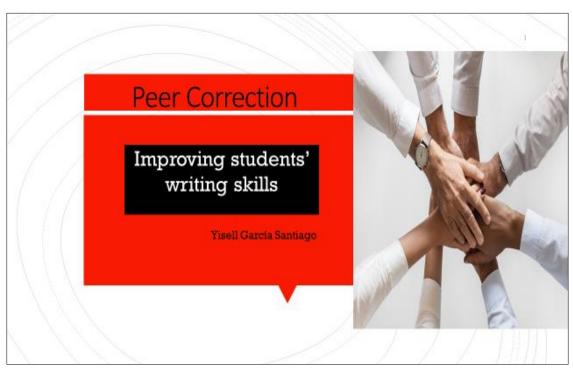
When I reviewed the literature on peer correction, I realized that it mostly focused on the benefits, the interactions between participants, as well as their perceptions and the importance of

instructing students. However, research on guidelines, actual activities, as well as lesson plans is not vast or is almost nonexistent. In this sense, further research that could inform teachers' practice is needed. It can be beneficial to have detailed lessons and instructional activities that teachers can find accessible to help their students understand the process as research shows that peer correction is beneficial for students to the extent to which they are instructed in responding to their peers.

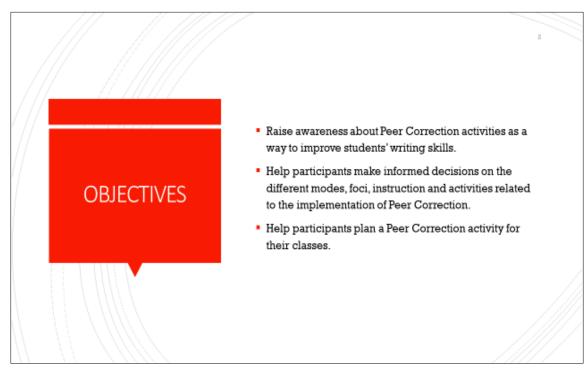
Throughout the process of writing my thesis and designing the workshop, I have reflected on how advantageous it would have been to me if, years ago, I had had the opportunity to learn about peer correction. I hope this workshop can be carried out in language institutions and universities where English is taught, especially in Colombia. I kept my colleagues in mind as I imagined myself teaching back home in Colombia, not knowing how beneficial something like this could be. As EFL teachers, we usually stress speaking skills and grammar knowledge. In this regard, I have, above all, discovered that even when the focus is on writing, peer correction has potential to help students in the four language skills; they write, they read peers' papers, they speak and listen to them as they engage in meaning negotiation. Therefore, our students' possibilities of improving their overall language skills increase when we bring peer correction into our classes.

# Appendices

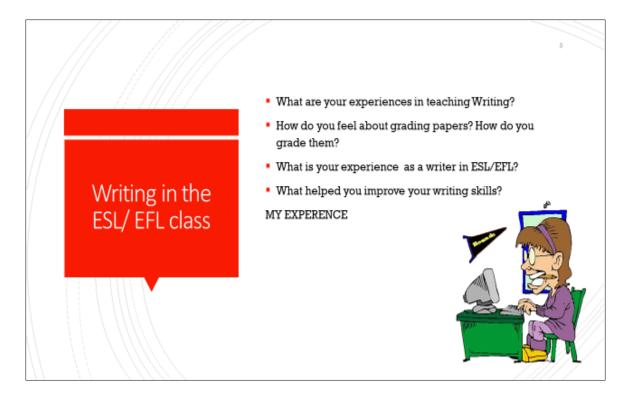
### **Appendix A Slides**



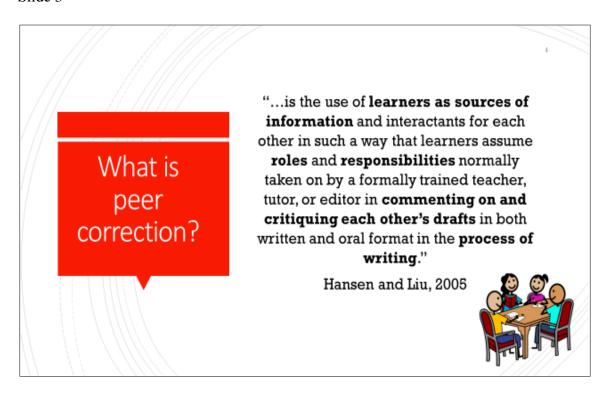
Slide 1



Slide 2



Slide 3



Slide 4

Have you used peer correction activities in your classes?

Research shows that teachers may not use peer correction activities in class because:

- It is a time consuming strategy.
- Students' language is not fully developed to actually correct others.
- They should not hand over the responsibility to students to correct others' papers.

(Rollinson, 2005; Sanchez-Naranjo, 2019)



Slide 5

Outstanding benefits in students' writing skills:

- Students reflect on their own writing
- Students develop a sense of autonomy
- Students participate in a collaborative environment in the classroom

(De-Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, 2000; Hammond, 2015, Herrera & Murry, 2016; Hyland, 2019; Itmeizeh, 2016; Nicol, Thomson & Brealin, 2014 Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Rollinson, 2005; Rouhi & Azizian, 2013; Sackstein, 2017; Suherman, 2018; Sultana, 2009).

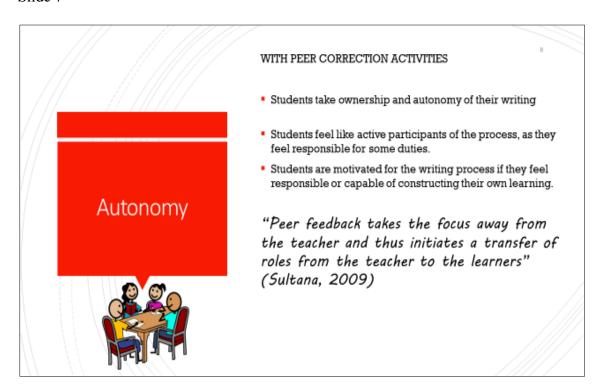
Slide 6

When students correct others' papers they reflect on their own.



- As students are instructed on how to comment or review their peers, they read more critically impacting their own writing pieces.
- Students reflect on the comments received by peers, helping them improve their writing skills.

Slide 7



Slide 8

# Collaborative Environment

### PEER CORRECTION:

- Helps with the creation of an environment of enjoyable collaboration in the classroom
- Allows the writers to have a real reader with whom they
  can construct meaning.
- Provides a relaxed context besides an authentic purpose for using the language.
- Facilitates social interaction and negotiation.
- is conducive for a community-building sense.

"...students have a genuine audience with who they feel comfortable and relaxed" Itmeizeh (2016)

Slide 9

What do you think your students may feel about peer correction?



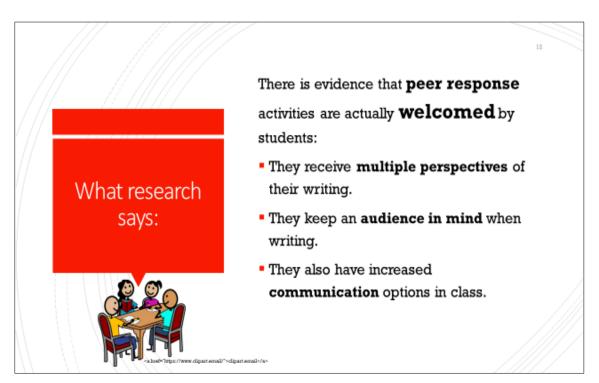
- •What did you think about group work as a student? Did you like it? Why?
- •What experiences did you have as a student working in groups?

Slide 10

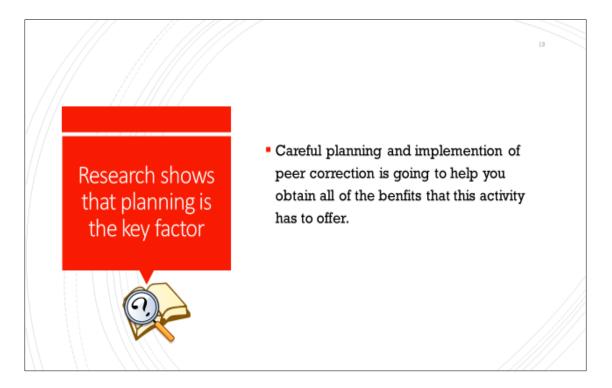
Some students think they do not master the language yet.
Other students may have negative attitudes:

be over critical
have negative reactions to their peers' comments.
Some students may be reluctant to receive feedback including the teacher's.
Some students do not know how to listen to feedback
Some students might need the practice to apply feedback.
Some students do not easily accept comments from another inexperienced ESL writer/reader.

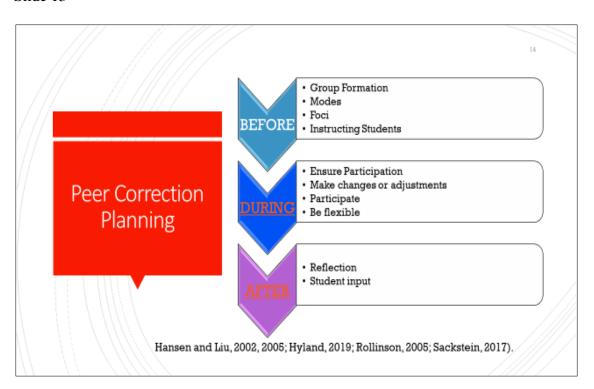
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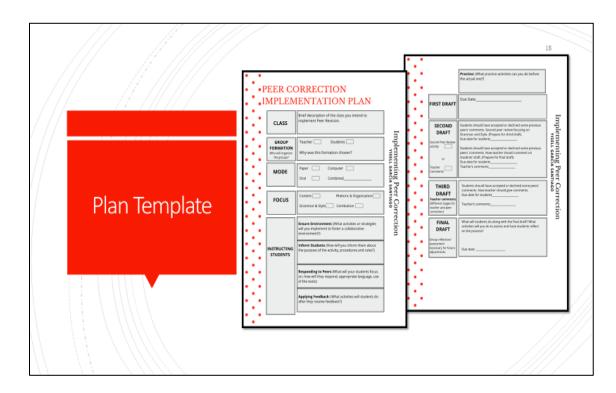
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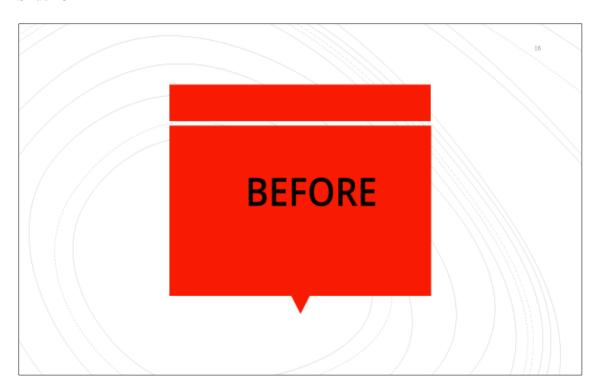
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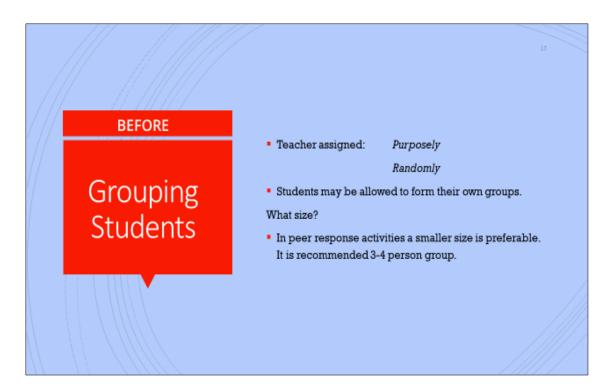
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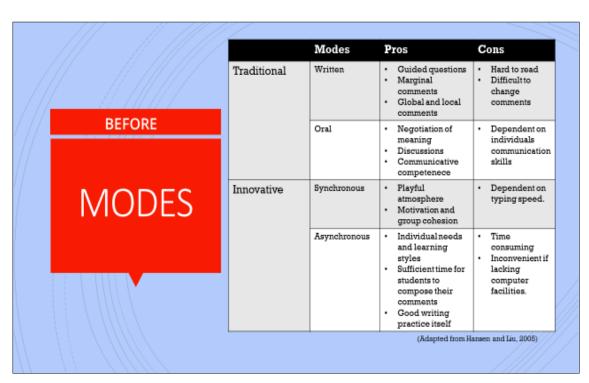
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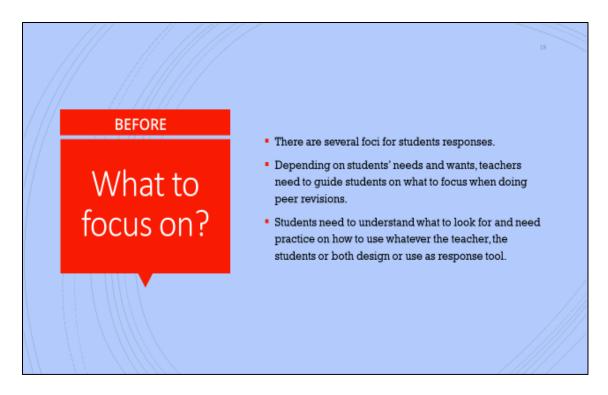
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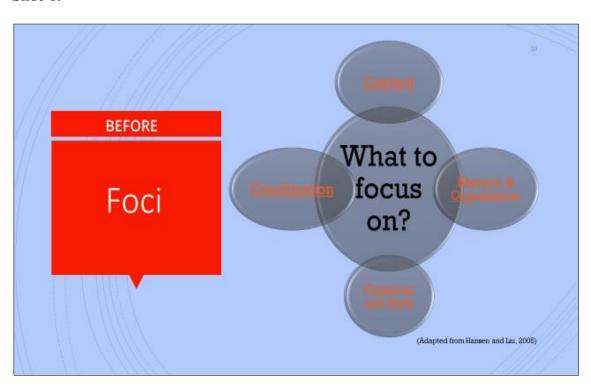
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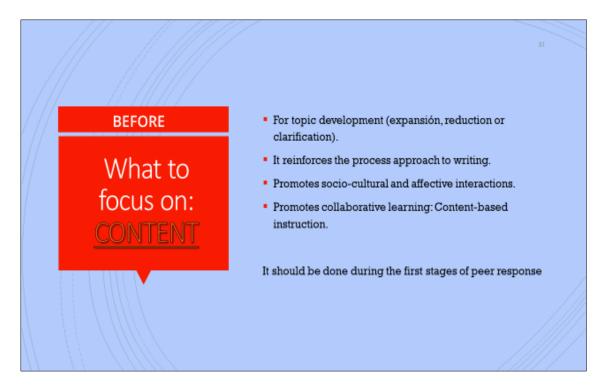
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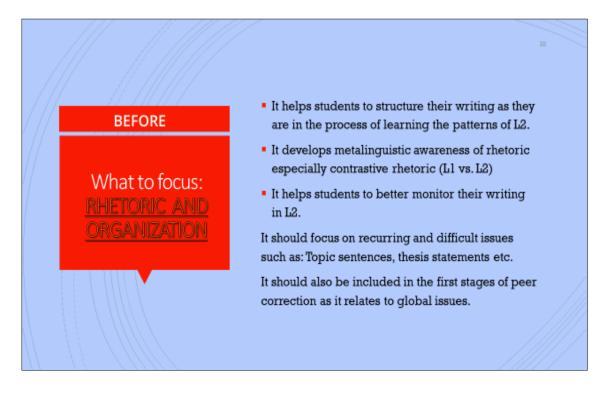
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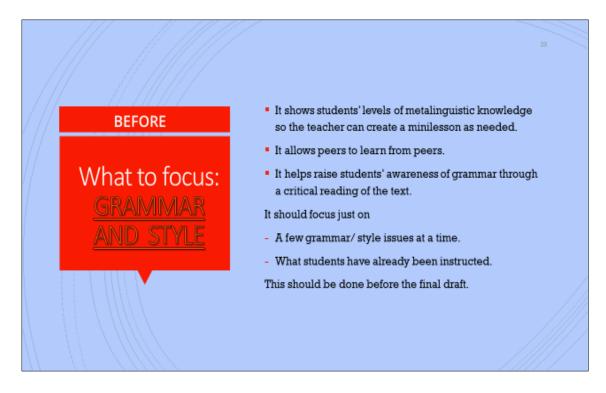
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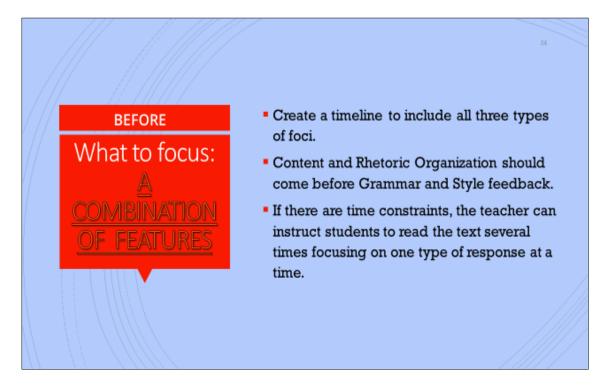
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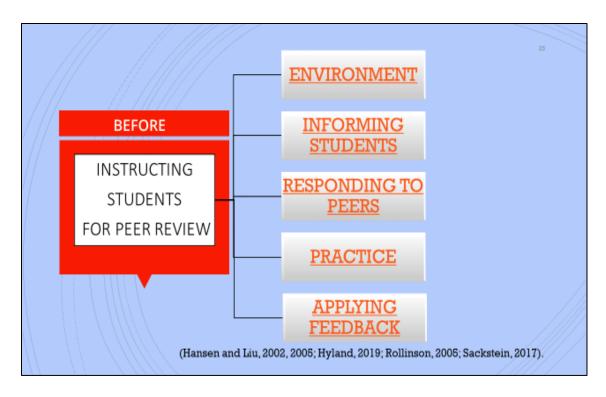
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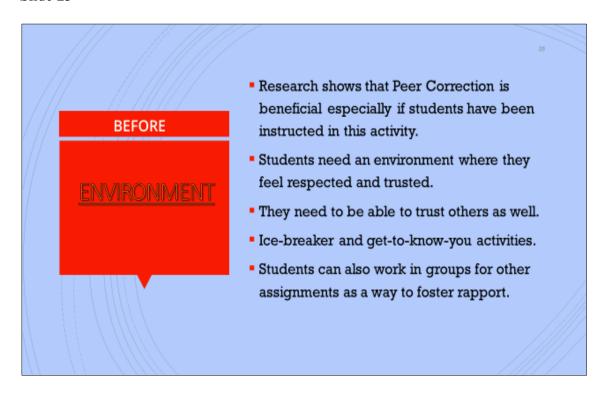
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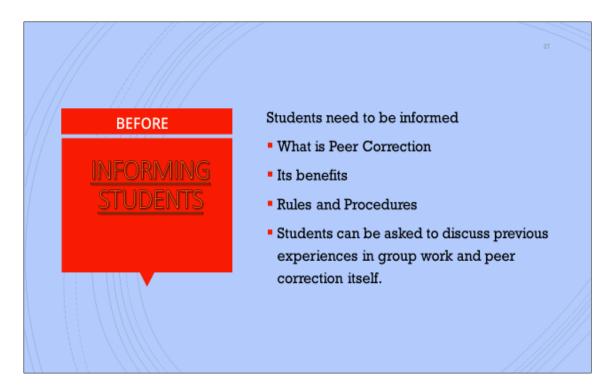
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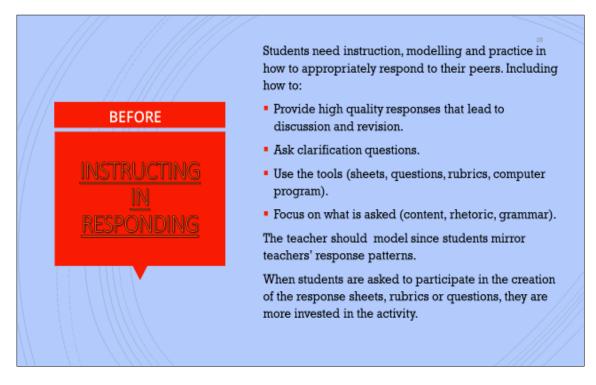
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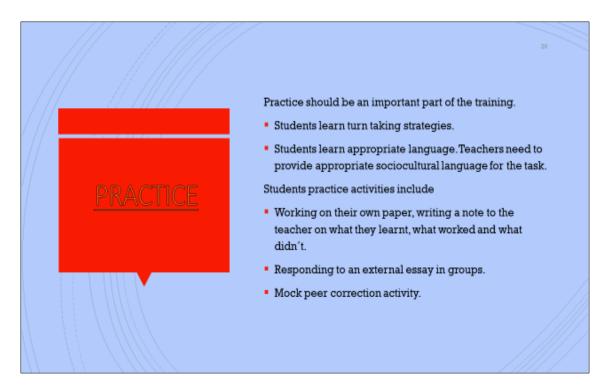
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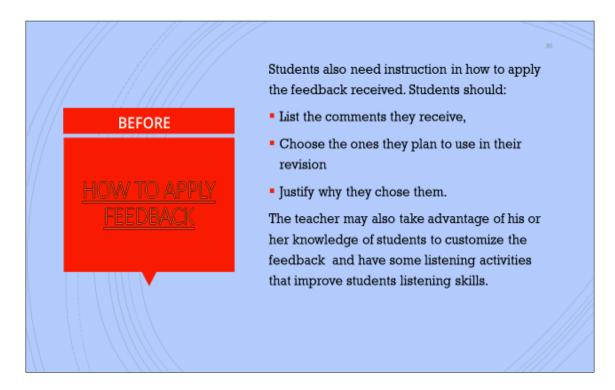
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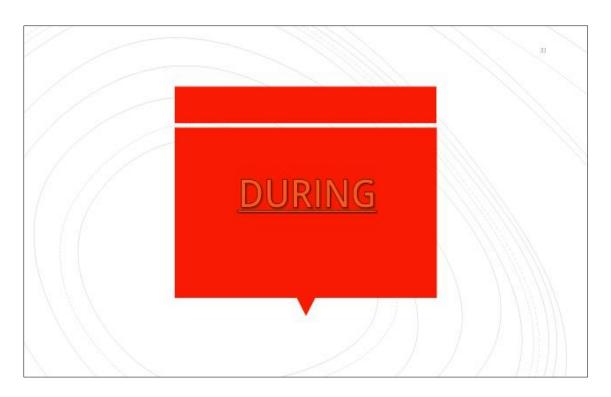
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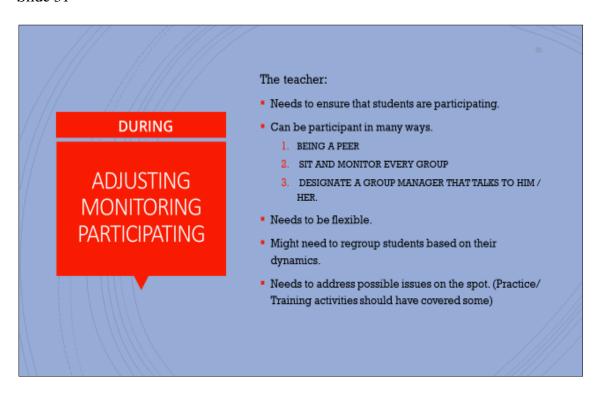
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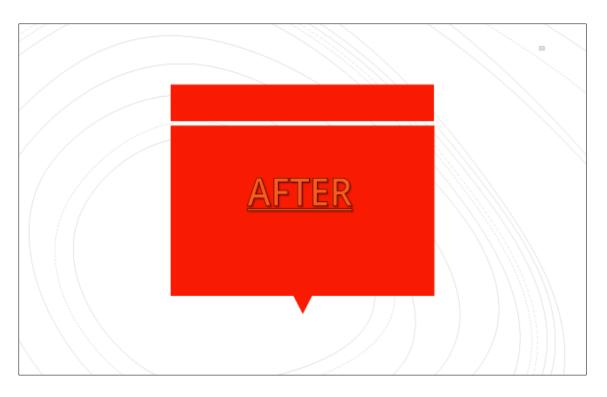
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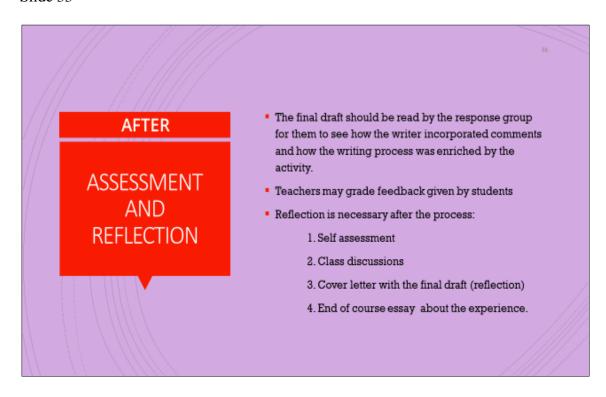
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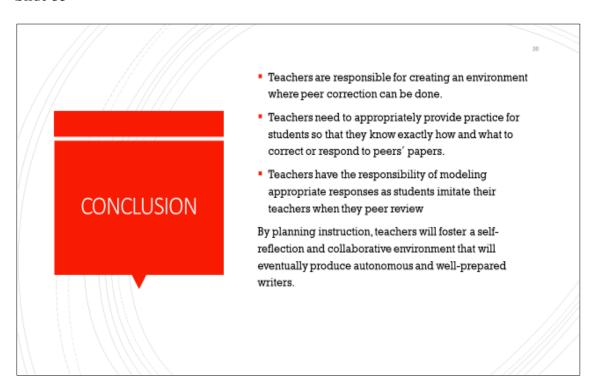
Slide 33



Slide 34



Slide 35



Slide 36



Slide 37

# Appendix B Agenda

| • | • |                                   |                     |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
|   |   | AGENDA                            | Implemen            |
| • |   | REGISTRATION/ HANDOUT DELIVERY    | me                  |
|   |   | INTRODUCTION                      | <del>[</del>        |
| • | • | OBJECTIVES PRESENTATION           | r<br>Su             |
| • | • | WRITING IN ESL/ EFL CLASSES:      | Peć                 |
|   |   | BENEFITS OF PEER CORRECTION       | GAR                 |
| • |   | BREAK                             | CIA                 |
| • | • | PLANNING PEER REVIEW              | reci                |
| • | • | CONCLUSION  QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS | ing Peer Correction |
| • | • | PRESENTATION EVALUATION           |                     |
| • | • |                                   |                     |
|   |   |                                   |                     |

# **Appendix C Implementation Plan Template**

|  | ORRECTION<br>IENTATION PLAN  |                          |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| CLASS  | Brief description of the class you intend to implement Peer Revision.  | Ir                       |
| GROUP<br>FORMATION<br>Who will organize<br>the groups? | Teacher Students Why was this formation chosen?  | nplemei                  |
| MODE   | Paper         Computer           Oral         Combined   | ementing Peer Correction |
| FOCUS  | Content Rhetoric & Organization Grammar & Style Combiation   | er Corr                  |
|  | Ensure Environment: (What activities or strategies will you implement to foster a collaborative environment?)          | ection                   |
| INSTRUCTING<br>STUDENTS                                | Inform Students (How will you inform them about the purpose of the activity, procedures and rules?)                    |                          |
|  | Responding to Peers (What will your students focus on, how will they respond, appropriate language, use of the tools): |                          |
|  | <b>Applying Feedback:</b> (What activities will students do after they receive feedback?)                              |                          |

| THIRD DRAFT Teacher comments  Students should have accepted or declined some peers' comments. Now teacher should give comments.  Due date for students  Comments  Students should have accepted or declined some peers' comments. Now teacher should give comments. Due date for students  Teacher comments (Different stages for teacher and peer correction)  FINAL DRAFT  Group reflection/ assessment necessary for future  Due date:  Due date:   |   | <b>Practice:</b> (What practice activities can you do before the actual one?)  |                                     |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| DRAFT Second Peer Review activity  Or Teacher Comments  THIRD DRAFT Teacher comments (Different stages for teacher and peer correction)  FINAL DRAFT Group reflection/ assessment necessary for future  To the date for students  Students Should have accepted or declined some previous peers' comments. Now teacher should comment on students' draft. (Prepare for final draft) Due date for students Teacher's comments  Students should have accepted or declined some peers' comments. Now teacher should give comments.  Due date for students Teacher's comments  Teacher's comments  What will students do along with the final draft? What activities will you do to assess and have students reflect on the process?  Due date:  Due date: | FIRST DRAFT   | Due Date:  | ļ .                                 |
| FINAL DRAFT  Group reflection/ assessment necessary for future  What will students do along with the final draft? What activities will you do to assess and have students reflect on the process?  Due date:   | DRAFT  Second Peer Review activity  or  Teacher               | peers' comments. Second peer review focusing on Grammar and Style. (Prepare for third draft). Due date for students  Students should have accepted or declined some previous peers' comments. Now teacher should comment on students' draft. (Prepare for final draft) Due date for students | mplementing Pee:  YISELL GARCIA SAN |
| activities will you do to assess and have students reflect on the process?  Group reflection/ assessment necessary for future  Due date:   | DRAFT Teacher comments (Different stages for teacher and peer | comments. Now teacher should give comments.  Due date for students   | r Correctio                         |
| adjustments.   | DRAFT  Group reflection/ assessment                           | activities will you do to assess and have students reflect on the process?   | n                                   |

## **Appendix D Further Reading**

| •   | FURTHER READING  |
|-----|--|
| •   | BOOKS  |
|     | BOOKS  PEER FEEDBACK IN THE CLASSROOM: EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BE THE EXPERT BY STARR SACKTEIN  SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING BY KEN HYLAND PEER RESPONSE IN SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING CLASSROOMS BY JETTE HANSEN and JUN LIU |
| •   | SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING  BY KEN HYLAND  BY KEN HYLAND  |
|     | 0 P  |
| •   | ARTICLES  GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE   |
| •   | PEER RESPONSE  |
| •   | BY JETTE HANSEN and JUN LIU  |
| •   | USING PEER FEEDBACK IN THE ESL WRITING CLASS BY PAUL ROLLINSON   |
| • • | TEACHING MATERIAL  TEACHING MATERIAL   |
|     | ERROR CORRECTION GAMES FOR WRITING http://www.kenlackman.com/files/WritingErrorsBook10A4.pdf BY KEN LACKMAN  |

## **Appendix E Presentation Evaluation**

|             | SENTATION EVALUATI  |               |
|-------------|---|---------------|
| Presentatio | n Grade: 5= Excellent; 4=Good; 3= Satisfactory; 2=Some Problems; problems; 0= Did not present; NA= Not applicable                                   | 1= M          |
|             |   |               |
| 1           | . Intruduction: Did the introduction capture your interest? Was necessary background given? Was a clear purpose conveyed?                           | YIS           |
| 2           | Organization: Was there a clear organization? Were transitions between sections clear and effective? Did the organization lead to clear conclusion? | YISELL GARCIA |
| 3           | Content: Did the speaker support her points? Was the supporting material reevant, up to date?   | IA SANTIAGO   |
| 4           | Visual Aids: Were visual aids used effectively and appropriately, carefully prepared?   | TIAGO         |
| 5           | Conclusion: Were key points reinforced? Was a sense of closure provided?If appropriate, was a course of action provided?                            |               |
| 6           | Delivery: Was the speaker natural, enthusiatic? Did she speak clearly? Were appropriate gestures, postures expressions used?                        |               |
| 7           | Discussion: Were questions answered accurately, clearly, effectively?   |               |
| 8           | General Comments:   |               |

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